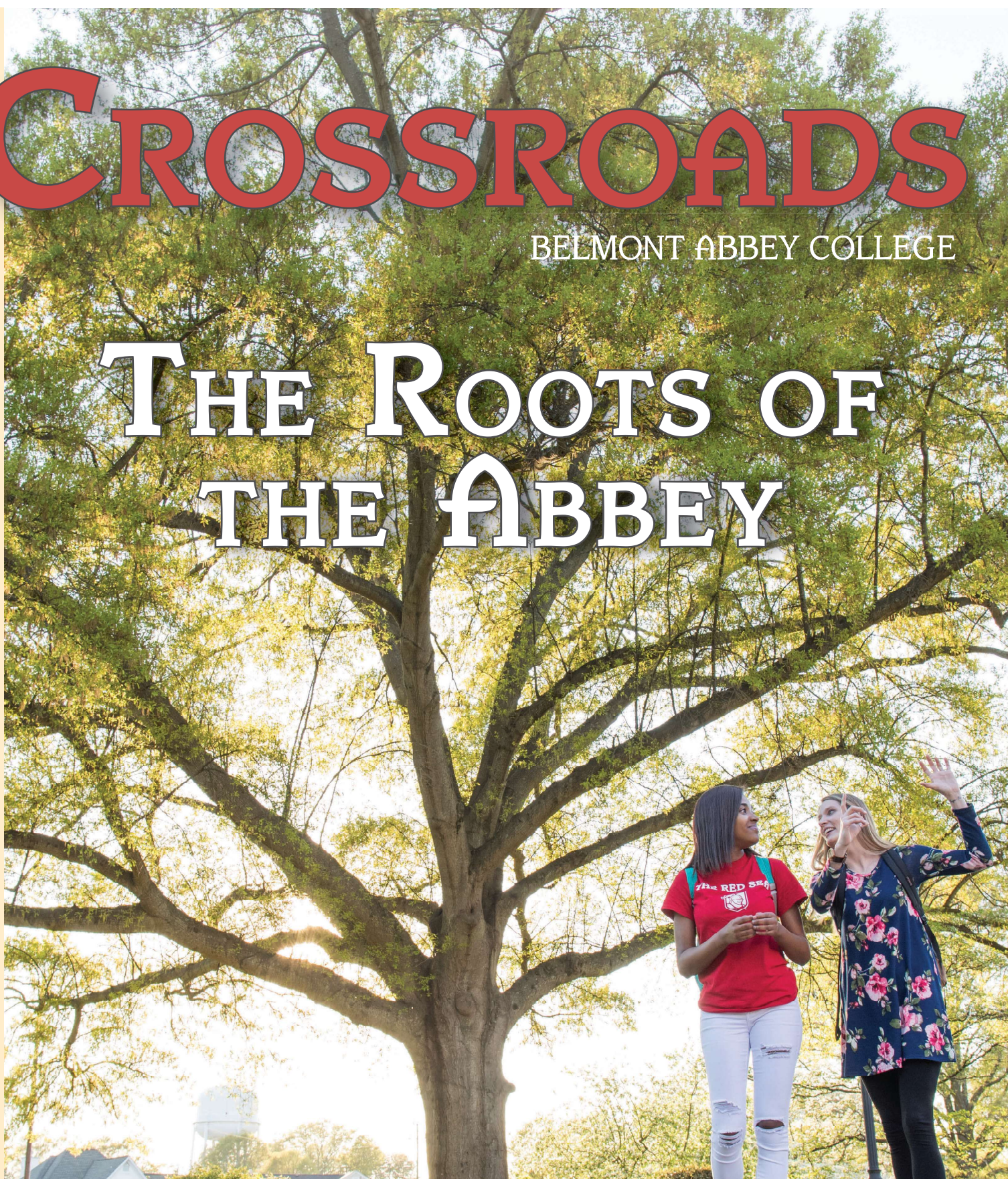


# CROSSROADS

BELMONT ABBEY COLLEGE

## THE ROOTS OF THE ABBEY

SPRING 2020



**CaroMont Health**  
New Hospital  
Coming Soon

**Faith and Foundation:**  
Rep. Patrick McHenry shares  
his Abbey story

**To Give and To Receive:**  
Perpetuating the Belmont  
Abbey College Experience





# DECADES AHEAD

By Rolando N. Rivas

When you walk across our campus, you can't miss the trees. They're like old friends, always there through the thick and thin through every season. Some days they're full in bloom, green and flowering. Other days they're bare, and their leaves collect across the campus. Though at times some die, some are trimmed or removed, collectively they remain. They're the backdrop of every memory of the Abbey.

Like an Abbey education, they persist in memory and remind us of and why we love this place. We recall those professors that taught us, those monks who guided us, those friends who shared our world. Like those trees, our Abbey roots run deep, and they endure. At the dawn of a new year, a new decade, we look ahead, and we look back, and we reflect on our Abbey roots and how they have shaped our lives.

In this issue, you'll read about how Fr. Cuthbert Allen encouraged the first African American student to attend the Abbey and hear from a U.S. Congressman who found faith and foundations at the Abbey. You'll get to know a couple who met at the Abbey and read about an alumnus whose family had immigrated from Cuba.

The stories of all of our alumni prove that what happens at the Abbey has a lasting impact. The experiences here bring to fruition the mission of our College — that our students become a blessing to themselves and others. That simple phrase encapsulates an inherent desire not just of our College, but every individual. For Abbey students of all generations, to live a life of blessings means success.

In this issue, we look back at Homecoming and Christmas and share about the relaunching of the 1876 Heritage Society. Additionally, we will reflect on the new CaroMont hospital coming to our campus and provide an update on the progress of the residence halls. Good news abounds at the Abbey.

As we embark into another decade and a future of unknowns, there's comfort in a place like the Abbey, a place that has endured for decades and generations. Like God himself, the Abbey seems to have always been here.

Let us be thankful for endurance, for persistence, for patience, and for strength. Most of all, let us be grateful to those that came before us — those that ensured the Abbey would be here for future generations through the sacrifice of their time, fortunes, and love. To the monks, to the faculty, to the administrators, and yes, the students themselves who built Belmont Abbey College, we say thank you for making the Abbey what it is today — a sturdy friend, whose roots reach ever deeper into the ground and whose branches reach ever higher to the heavens. A friend who will remain for decades to come. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RNR'.



# LIFE AT THE ABBEY

This past January our students attended the March of Life to support the rights of the unborn and the helpless.







24.

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# CROSSROADS

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**Mission Statement of Belmont Abbey College:** Our mission is to educate students in the liberal arts and sciences so that in all things God may be glorified. In this endeavor, we are guided by the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Benedictine spirit of prayer and learning. Exemplifying Benedictine hospitality, we welcome a diverse body of students and provide them with an education that will enable them to lead lives of integrity, to succeed professionally, to become responsible citizens, and to be a blessing to themselves and to others.

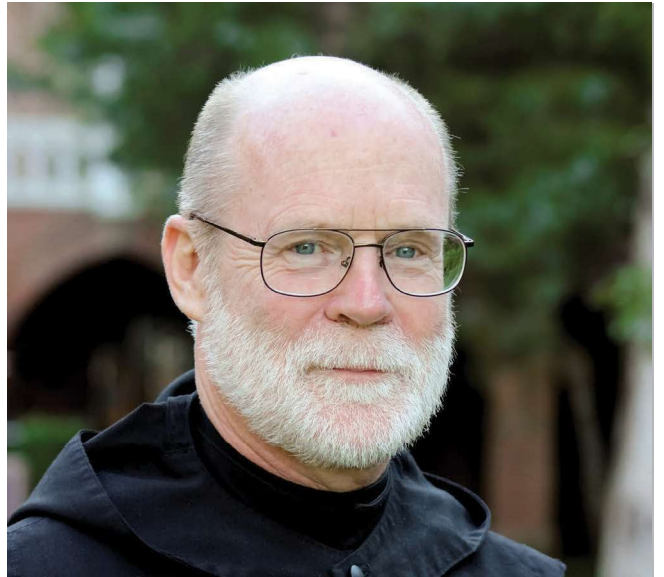


**Belmont Abbey**  
COLLEGE



# AN ABBEY EDUCATION IS FOREVER

By Abbot Placid Solari, O.S.B.



W e recently held “Scholarship Weekend” here at the College for applicants to the Honors College, Hintemeyer Catholic Leadership Program, St. Thomas More Scholars, and the newly established Bishop Curlin Scholarship. As Abbot and Chancellor, I have the pleasure of welcoming these prospective students and their parents to the Abbey. Each time I have this opportunity, it is a challenge for me to adequately and precisely communicate what sets an Abbey education apart. Guests frequently comment how this is a “special place,” or that coming onto campus they have a sense of peace. Everyone reading this can probably identify immediately with these remarks. My challenge lies in how to communicate this succinctly and clearly to someone newly arrived. On this recent occasion, as I prepared to speak, three things about our alumni came to mind, which, I think, characterize an Abbey education. I offered these three things to the potential future alumni as challenges for their discernment as to whether Belmont Abbey College was the right place for them.

In the first place, I challenged them to reflect on the woman or man they wanted to become, and to ask themselves whether that was the woman or man they ought to become? All prospective students are investigating whether the College provides the programs to prepare them for the vocations or careers attractive to them at the moment. While the Abbey can prepare them quite well for a professional career or graduate studies, this is a necessary but only partial benefit of an Abbey education. Far more importantly, an Abbey education will offer them insight on what it means to be a good person and a successful human being and to realize why that is so

important. Abbey alumni, in my experience, are not only successful professionally but, more importantly, are good people. Without this moral compass, this solid foundation in knowing right from wrong, any professional success will seem empty; with it, even failure can be integrated into a purposeful and fulfilling life.

Next, I spoke about friendships. I have always been impressed with the network of friends connecting Abbey alums. These networks of friends seem to be, in a certain way, a continuation through life of the support and accountability developed in the College community. Friends are a very great treasure in life. What would our life be without them? Only good people, however, can be true friends, and true friends help each other to become better people. My question to the prospective students was whether they have yet achieved a level of goodness that would enable them to be a good friend. An Abbey education, with its dedication to the pursuit of truth and the discernment of the moral order arising from that truth provides the necessary – and indeed the only – foundation on which true friendship can grow.

Finally, I explained to the prospective students that our concern in looking beyond only a successful professional career and focusing on becoming a good person is because we, the monks who founded the College, believe that an Abbey education is forever. What I mean is that we believe that the real goal of an Abbey education is eternal life. The ultimate success in life is to live a life so good, so beautiful that it is worthy of heaven. While I will refrain from claiming that all our Abbey alums are already saints, I know many of them who are excellent people. I would like to think that our Abbey education helped on the way! ■

*Abbot Placid*





# THE BLESSING OF STABILITY

By Dr. Bill Thierfelder

**A**s we all gathered in the cemetery today to pay our final respects to Father Arthur, I could not help noticing the rows upon rows of gravestones marking the final resting places of all the monks who had gone before him. As I read the years of their births, professions, ordinations, and deaths, I reflected on the great blessing and example of stability that our monastic community offers us.

In *A Reflection On the Benedictine Vow of Stability*, Monsignor Charles Pope wrote about how one Benedictine community described their vow of stability. “We vow to remain all our life with our local community. We live together, pray together, work together, relax together. We give up the temptation to move from place to place in search of an ideal situation. Ultimately, there is no escape from oneself, and the idea that things would be better someplace else is usually an illusion. And when interpersonal conflicts arise, we have a great incentive to work things out and restore peace. This means learning the practices of love: acknowledging one’s own offensive behavior, giving up one’s preferences, forgiving.”

In a culture where we are constantly on the move and often separated from our families, the importance of stability has never been greater. I have often said to my children, “I realize that opportunities will come your way that might take you away to far flung places but before you make a decision to go, consider the importance of living in close proximity to parents, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, great aunts, great uncles, and grandparents.” Like the members of a monastic community, family members are not perfect or always easy to live with, but living with them and among them teaches us a lot about ourselves and what it really means to love and forgive one another. In good times and bad, there is nothing more welcomed than the love and support we receive from our families.

The same applies to friendships. Think of the remarkable, rare, and long-lasting friendships that began at the Abbey because you and your friends were here, fully present to each other. Money, power, fame, or pleasure may come or go, but they will never fully satisfy the heart or take the place of family and close friends. Of all the things that stability can teach us, one of the most important might be that the grass is not always greener on the other side.

Please keep Fr. Arthur and all of the monks of Belmont Abbey, past and present, in your prayers especially as we prepare to celebrate 144 years of stability this Founder’s Day, April 21, 2020.

God bless,

*Bill*



# Faith and Service

Felipe Villalón '68

**F**elipe Villalón was born in La Habana, Cuba. In 1960, at the age of fourteen, he moved with his family to the United States. Four years later, he graduated from Bishop McGuinness Memorial High School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and headed to Belmont Abbey to start his college career. He had chosen Belmont Abbey over his other choice school, Wake Forest, because he thought it would be an important experience to be away from home. He also had some high school friends planning to attend the Abbey. Little did he know that those high school friends would become his life-long friends over the next four years

When Felipe started at the Abbey, his plan was to study here for three

years and then transfer to NC State to complete an engineering program. In the first semester of his sophomore year, however, he realized that he did not want to be an engineer. This realization shook him. He had spent an entire year studying something he no longer wanted to pursue, and he knew he would not be able to pay to attend the Abbey for more than four years. Still, Felipe decided to change his major to Political Science because of Fr. Edmund's influence. Felipe recalls Fr. Edmund's charisma and ability to make the subject come alive. This resonated with the young man from a family of lawyers. "My family has always been lawyers," Felipe explains. "But, I guess it skipped a generation with me. My son is a lawyer now!"

While the academic side of college life had an impact on Felipe, the community he found outside the classroom also influenced his future. Felipe was a member of the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity and served as a Proctor under the Dean of Students. In the TKE community, Felipe found brotherhood and developed leadership skills that would prove necessary later in life. The Proctor program is now known as the Resident Assistant program at the Abbey and students chosen for this program are tasked with building community among the students in their appointed residence hall. Felipe was chosen to be a Proctor by Fr. Donald, and he is thankful for the lessons the position taught him. With the help of the Administration, the support of his friends, and a lot of hard work, Felipe graduated in 1968 with his degree in Political Science.

When most students come to the

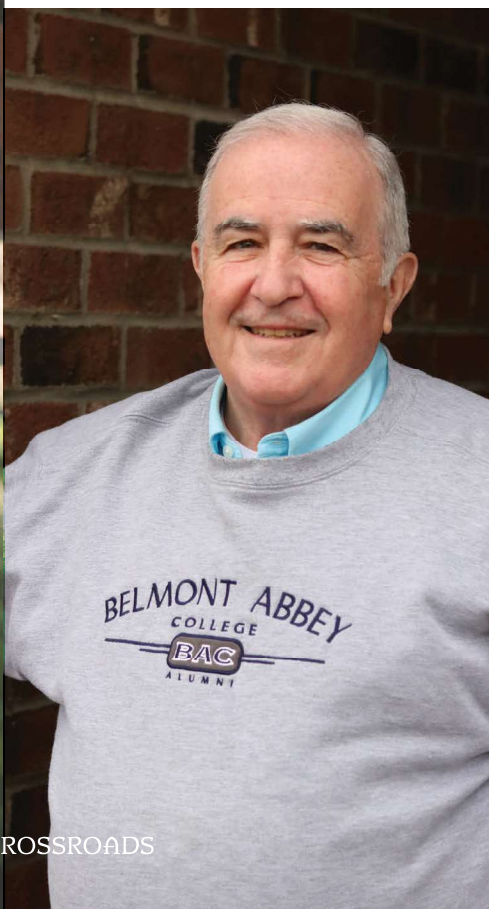
end of their college career, they are faced with a world of possibilities. Graduating in the midst of the Vietnam War left Felipe with only two choices: to be drafted or to volunteer. He chose the latter and signed on with the U.S. Navy. Even though Felipe was a college graduate, he was ineligible to be an officer because he was only a resident of the United States and not a citizen. Instead he was assigned to be an instructor at the Polaris "A" School in Dam Neck, Virginia, thanks to his experiences from his first year at the Abbey in the engineering program. His background in chemistry and physics made him a perfect candidate for the position. Later in his Navy career, Felipe was chosen to serve on the U.S.S. Holland in Rota, Spain because of his fluency in Spanish.

After being discharged from the Navy, Felipe began a successful career in banking, although it began a little sooner than he had anticipated. "As I was leaving the plane after being discharged, I met my father," Felipe recalls. "He said to me, 'You have an interview this afternoon with Wachovia Bank, so get ready and go.' Thank goodness I had bought a suit because I was planning on beginning to interview - but not that afternoon!" Nonetheless, that interview proved to be successful and Felipe worked for Wachovia Bank and Trust Company for thirty years before retiring in 2002. After that, he joined Branch Banking and Trust Company and retired again in 2011.

Felipe's faith has always played an important role in his life. His family chose to leave Cuba for religious freedom. The state was taking children away from their families

"It is the door to your future...It gives you the ability to go forward."

By Bridgette Conboy '15







at the time, so his parents decided to take their children out of the country. Felipe fondly recalls his mother's faith through it all. Their first years in the United States were difficult, but his mother's faith never faltered. Felipe remembers worrying about how the family would eat next week, but his mother never worried. She knew that God would take care of her and her family. Going through the Catholic education system helped improve Felipe's faith. One of his favorite things about attending the Abbey was having the opportunity to go to Mass at what was then the Cathedral. Felipe continues to be involved in his faith through his work with Our Lady of Mercy in Winston-Salem. He has served as a pastoral council member and on the Board of Education at the Church's School, and he's been an active member of the Knights of Columbus since 1969. Felipe was even appointed by Bishop Jugis to serve on the Diocesan Board of Education, a position from which he retired in 2011. Now, Felipe serves with Samaritan Ministries Soup Kitchen as part of the Friday team serving the poor and hungry in his community.

Felipe may be busy with his community in Winston-Salem, but he has never forgotten the Abbey. He is an active member of the Alumni Association and has been for over fifty years and chooses to stay involved because the Abbey was there for him when he most needed help. He always felt supported, not just in academics, but also through the guidance he received that enabled him to graduate in four years. Felipe found a family at the Abbey and feels right at home when he comes back to visit. He's grateful to the Abbey for giving him a solid understanding of the importance of a good education and is excited to see the growth the school is experiencing. "It is the door to your future," he explains. "It gives you the ability to go forward." ■





# Pursuing Virtue in Mind, Body, and Spirit

By Bridgette Conboy '15



Scholarship program which included a retreat before classes started. She hadn't felt immediately at ease with the Abbey, but once the retreat was over, Kelsey knew she had found her home and was excited to start preparing for a career as a physician's assistant. Patch's freshman experience was a bit different. He was focused and shy, and he had no

idea what he wanted to do. One of the things that drove him to choose the Abbey was the opportunity to explore his options before choosing a major presented by the Abbey's liberal arts curriculum. He was also looking for a school that aligned with his Catholic values. And while he didn't find an immediate home at the Abbey, over time he grew to love it. Since his time at the Abbey, he has had two of his siblings follow in his footsteps.

blessed to have found in each other a calling to grow in faith and prayerfully looking to the future. They also enjoyed going for walks around campus and hiking at Crowder's Mountain. Kelsey has fond memories of participating in Little Women with the Abbey Players because she enjoyed branching out and making new friends. Patch enjoyed his time on the basketball team especially due to the camaraderie and diversity he found there. He now has friends from Australia, Latvia, Lithuania, Canada, the Virgin Islands, and Slovakia who helped him expand his worldview. Both Patch and Kelsey fondly remembered the activities put on by student activities like concerts, intramural sports, campus-wide games, and dances. Midway through their time at the Abbey, the St. Joseph's Adoration Chapel was built. The quiet solitude and the distinct smell of cedar provided them both a place of calm.

**T**he Kuhlman family lives on a quiet street in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Patch and Kelsey Kuhlman together with their three children, Blaise, Benny, and Stella, make up this young family that strives to live lives of virtue. Both Patch and Kelsey are Abbey alumni. Patch left the Abbey in 2010 having majored in Biology with plans to pursue medicine, and Kelsey followed in 2011 with her Elementary Education degree.

When Kelsey started out her Freshman year at the Abbey, she was excited and enthusiastic to meet new people. Toward the end of her high school career, she had gone through a deepening in her faith and was looking for a Catholic college with like-minded people. She was part of the Hintemeyer

When Patch and Kelsey look back on their time at the Abbey, they find it hard to pinpoint one definitive or favorite memory. For them, it's the simple things that come to mind like daily mass followed by dinner with friends and study dates in the library, Holy Grounds, and Grace Auditorium. They met while they were students at the Abbey and feel

When it comes to their lives now, Patch and Kelsey have been lead to very different roles. Patch is a fellow at Wake Forest's Hematology and Oncology Training Program and Kelsey works to homeschool their children. The Abbey was formative for them in both of their roles. Patch always knew he wanted to be in a career of service, but it was a Cell Biology class that

When it comes to their lives now, Patch and Kelsey have been lead to very different roles. Patch is a fellow at Wake Forest's Hematology and Oncology Training Program and Kelsey works to homeschool their children. The Abbey was formative for them in both of their roles. Patch always knew he wanted to be in a career of service, but it was a Cell Biology class that

**“Taking time out of each day to pray together and keeping that prayer on-track in the midst of motherhood is challenging”**



made him realize that he enjoyed the science behind medicine and that being a physician was his vocation. Being able to study biology and theology in tandem was a blessing for Patch. Classes that were instrumental in his career development were Moral Theology with Fr. Christopher and Bioethics with Dr. Grattan Brown. Patch almost missed out on being able to take Bioethics due to his schedule, but Dr. Brown offered him an independent study. This showing of kindness and compassion had an impact on Patch. Both Patch and Kelsey fondly remember the environment of success they found at the Abbey. They felt that the faculty members truly wanted and encouraged their students to do their best.

Kelsey is glad that she decided not to be a physician's assistant because her elementary education degree is impacting how she homeschools her children. She is able to look back on the techniques and methods she learned from her classes to serve her family. Outside of the classroom, she remembers witnessing the Monks' example of Benedictine hospitality and a life of prayer. She is thankful for that influence in her life as she strives to raise her family in a life of virtue. "Taking time out of each day to pray together and keeping that prayer on-track in the midst of motherhood is challenging," she says. She finds inspiration from the Monks' ability to intertwine their community prayers with their daily lives. While Kelsey doesn't have a career as the world defines it, she works tirelessly for her family. The couple likes to joke that Kelsey breaks duty hours more than Patch does.

Pursuing virtue in body, mind, and soul was an ever-present theme for the couple while they were at the Abbey and it continues to impact their young family in concrete ways. They pray together each night and enjoy reading the Bible as a family. Both Patch and Kelsey found that the Abbey reinforced their values. Patch grew up in a family that believed faith and family were the most important things and everything else would fall into place. Kelsey found that her values were strengthened through the friendships she found with like-minded people at the Abbey. They

are also thankful that they had the ability to grow as life-long learners at the Abbey. Having the ability to problem-solve new issues that arise is a part of their daily lives and something they want to teach their children.

Everyone deals with uncertainty in their lives, and Patch and Kelsey are no different. Toward the end of her college career, Kelsey felt uncertain about where her life was going and what God was calling her to do. "Having a place to pray and people to talk to helped," she explains. "Fr. Kieran was a big help during that time. His joy, guidance, and wisdom helped me a lot." She also remembers going on walks with friends on the Brother Paul trail to discuss life and where God was taking them.

Patch had two periods of uncertainty during which the Abbey helped him. At the beginning of his college career, he felt uncertain because he had no clear path for his major and career. Things became clearer over time, especially in his sophomore year. "Focusing on my goals and next steps really helped me overcome that uncertainty," he recalls. His second round of uncertainty was after he had graduated. He was an intern in his first year at medical school. He and Kelsey had also just moved and were having their first child. "During that time, I couldn't see myself doing a good job as a physician." Patch turned to the people who had supported him while he was at the Abbey, and he was happy to find their support and encouragement even though he was no longer a student. He also feels blessed to have had Kelsey during that time. Her prayers and support when he wasn't home much helped him continue on his residency path and to obtain his Oncology Fellowship. Kelsey recalls leaning heavily on her recent experiences with doubt and uncertainty. "I was able to



understand his feelings because I had experienced similar anxieties myself," she explains.

Since their graduations, Patch and Kelsey have stayed in touch with the Abbey because they find value in supporting people who are making a positive difference in the world. Their first-hand experiences and the ways in which they benefited from the Abbey are important to them and they want others to have those experiences. They enjoy going back to watch basketball with their family. They've also had some additional encouragement to stay involved because, for the last ten years, one of Patch's siblings has been a student at the Abbey. Currently, his sister, Maria, is on the Women's Basketball team. "I think we're following the Women's team more than the Men's right now because the kids love seeing Aunt Maria play," Patch says with a laugh. Patch and Kelsey consider the Abbey their home away from home. They love the mission of the College and want to be a part of it for as long as they can. ■



**“I came in as a transfer student from N.C. State and the Abbey was my second chance to get on the right track... I really didn’t have the tools I needed in order to succeed. But the Abbey gave me those tools...”**

# Faith and Foundations

Rep. Patrick McHenry shares his Abbey story

By Emily Williams '07

There have been many alumni of the Abbey who have scored a few mentions in the history books, whose faces are well-known enough, either locally or nationally, that those unfamiliar with our college might be able to easily say “Hey! Is that who I think it is?” But it is rare nowadays to be able to proudly proclaim that a current Abbey grad now serves as a Congressman in the U.S. House of Representatives. And if you live in Gaston County, then you are lucky enough to have Patrick McHenry '99 represent you in our nation’s capital. As with all careers in politics, one may attribute his success to aptitude, connections or sheer luck, but Patrick says it all comes down to one thing: his Abbey education.

“The Abbey is very foundational,” he says. “People can disagree about elections and political matters, but what the Abbey gave me was an understanding of logic, the moral foundations of our society, what our obligations are to one another and how to treat one another. The Abbey reconnected me in a meaningful way with my faith and that hasn’t changed.”

When young 20-something Patrick McHenry from Gastonia arrived at Belmont Abbey College, he was far from stellar. He was a student who struggled, as many do, with the rigors of college life. Thankfully, all the skills he needed to succeed were readily provided.

“I was just like anyone else,” he says. “I came in as a transfer student from N.C. State and the Abbey was my second chance to get on the right track. I was an above-average student in high school, but a below-average one when I was at N.C. State, which was due to a lack of discipline. I really didn’t have the tools I needed in order to succeed. But the Abbey gave me those tools: a way of approaching study, the time it takes and the requisite consequences of not doing those things.”

Most importantly, Patrick points to Abbot Placid Solari, O.S.B. as a very significant factor in helping him get up to speed. “At that time, Abbot Placid was the Academic Dean and he seemed to know what was going on in my life better than I did,” says Patrick. “That’s what I needed in order to get value out of my education. That was a massive benefit. The care and time he took

with me and his understanding not of what I wanted but what I needed made a massive difference – not just during my time there, but also since I’ve left campus. He has had the greatest lasting impact on my life.”

As a History major, Patrick has particularly fond memories of his studies. Ask him to reflect on his professors and the anecdotes come fast and thick: “I look back now and realize I didn’t know how blessed I was to have the kind of opportunities that came my way. For example, Abbot Walter Coggin, O.S.B. was still teaching when I was there. I mean, here is a father of the Second Vatican Council; he lived a piece of history and I had the opportunity to learn from him! Of course, I remember Dr. Francis Murray and Dr. Edward McGee in the History department. I recall Dr. Murray walking students through European history like he was





taking them on a walk through a park. When I read a book about Russian history now, I hear Dr. McGee's voice as I read. He had a very distinctive voice – a Johnny Carson-like quality. It still sticks with me. I especially remember Dr. McGee being very patient with me as I gave a presentation on the life of General George S. Patton for my history senior seminar," he adds with a chuckle. "So I have a lot of very good, lasting memories."

Despite his love of history, it was politics where Patrick found his niche. He founded the Abbey's College Republican chapter as a student while going on to hold positions in other national College Republican organizations. He ran for public office in the N.C. House of Representatives in 1998, a year before he graduated from the Abbey. He won that primary yet lost the election. Undeterred, he went on to Washington, D.C. to work with a media consulting firm before Karl Rove picked him to be the National Coalition Director for George W. Bush's successful presidential campaign in 2000. His political career took off after that, eventually culminating in representing North Carolina's 10th Congressional District.

He has certainly come a long way. Yet, Patrick takes a very humble attitude to his achievements and points to BAC as putting him on the path to where he is today. His faith, he says, plays a major role in how he perceives modern day politics.

"My faith is both a limiting and liberating aspect of life," he says. "It's a high obligation and at the same time an enormous liberator. The obligation is upon me and how I treat others and to model that. However, we have a larger debate that is happening in society and I think we are at a low point for political discourse, the use of logic and the driving forces of logic and ethics in political debate. I think that's a sad thing, but it's important that we model the behavior that we seek in others. We have a higher obligation to model the society that we wish to see and rebuild it. It's far deeper than what's happening in terms of votes or elections; it's a far deeper societal consequence of where we are right now."

Like many other Abbey graduates, his connections to the school run through several different threads of life: he was both baptized and married at the Abbey's basilica; his father, an uncle and three sisters are all Abbey graduates and his parents are now buried in the college's cemetery.

"All of that really shows how much the Abbey has meant to me," he explains. "If I visit the college now, with my parents being there, it's really like coming home."

As always, if there is one thing that binds graduates of the college together, it is the concept of this college as a second home – thankfully for us, Rep. Patrick McHenry '99 is no exception. ■





# Learning to Build Communities

By Rolando N. Rivas

**W**hen it comes to racial equality, back in 1958 the world was different. The American South was different then, too. Father Cuthbert Allen wanted the Abbey to be different in another way. He wanted the Abbey to be ahead of the times. Such concern and action on behalf of African Americans in the South goes back to our very founding by Abbot Leo Haid. In fact, when helping to fund construction of the Abbey's Basilica, St. Katharine Drexel wanted the Abbey's academic and social doors opened to African Americans, and Leo Haid happily obliged. More than eighty years later, Father Allen thought the classroom doors should be opened too.

At that time, Alphonso Patrick from Salisbury, NC, attended high school at St. Emma Military Academy, the only military academy then open to African Americans. Run by the Holy Ghost Fathers in Rock Castle, Virginia, their mission was to convert Black Americans to Catholicism. Their benefactor was also St. Katharine Drexel. Alphonso's parish priest in Salisbury had introduced him to the academy where he attended and played football for four years, resulting in a successful high school career.

After graduation, Alphonso wanted to play football in college at a Catholic college. He set his sights on Holy Cross

in Massachusetts, but was not accepted. He secured an offer to Yale, but Yale required another prep school. Like many other young Catholics of the era, he also applied to Notre Dame, who asked for game film, since they didn't scout his conference. Saint Emma Military Academy hardly had helmets, much less game film. So instead he applied to Duquesne University, was accepted, signed and ready to go.

Meanwhile in North Carolina, his parish priest, Father Zaylor, met Father Cuthbert Allen in Raleigh at the bishop's office. There, Father Allen made a bold announcement that he wanted the Abbey to be ahead of the times and enroll its first African American student. Father Zaylor had a student in mind. Zaylor contacted Alphonso and his parents, but despite the priest's excitement, Alphonso said the Abbey was not on his list. He was reluctant to change his plan, and wasn't interested in being a 'first' at the school. With his mother's encouragement, however, he visited with Father Cuthbert Allen at the Abbey.

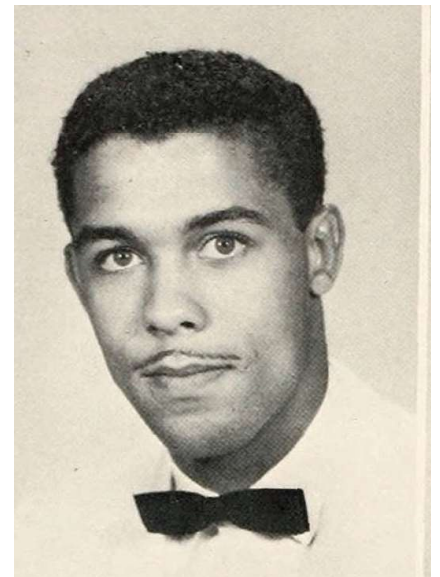
After Mass on an August Sunday, mother and son headed to Belmont. After an hour-long meeting, and tour of the campus, Alphonso told Allen, "Father, I've enjoyed this visit. Campus is right here; let's give it a shot." Still he was concerned - he hadn't yet applied. Father Allen responded, "Alphonso, if you were accepted at Duquesne, there won't be any problem here."

Father Cuthbert Allen told him not to worry, that he would be welcomed on campus. Despite not living on campus his first semester and walking over every morning, he recalled that he never had any outward racial issues. Once he moved to campus, he was already close to men from Florida (John Caven, Stanley Norton, Ben Cornelius),

Georgia, Virginia (Robert Dollard, Gerry Balducci), New York (Jim Lytle), and the surrounding area.

"It was a tremendous learning period," he remarked about his time at the Abbey. "Here, I found the guys interesting and never had any fear. We tended very quickly to communicate. As any person would be at any school with his fellows, Mike Snyder and I became great friends." Even Coach Al Maguire was helpful. "My first day in class he made every effort to make me feel welcomed, asking, "What's your name fella?" and I said, "Alphonso Patrick," and he said "Oh, it's Al just like me".

He also forged friendships with the young ladies from Sacred Heart who, by this time, had joined in the classrooms. "I found it quite formative and helpful, on top of it, during my last two years change was taking place all around me. The sit-ins in Charlotte were happening. Speeches were made in our classes. We didn't do any sit-ins here. Arturo Taquechel and I went to a Chinese restaurant, and they were a little antsy with me being there, and Pete formally announced I was his cousin, and that he



**“It was a tremendous learning period... I found it quite formative and helpful...”**





didn't have that kind of issue in Cuba."

A few more Black students came to the Abbey in the following years. However, Alphonso was the only African American student to graduate in 1962. "As I finished at the Abbey, I wanted to go to the state department to be a part of the independence movement, because of having been at St. Emma's, and then the Abbey, I had been on the radar for the Marine Corps Officer Candidate School," said Patrick. "I was asked to join, but decided not to do that." He went to the State Department where the recruiter admonished, "Son, you have a lot to learn, you don't fit the bill. All of these ambassadors are just sons of rich white families, and you don't fit that category." Patrick recalls, "I said, 'I'll take my chances.'"

The days of friendship at the Abbey extended to the faculty that helped him forge his career and he discovered a passion for building communities. "The formative times here were

good. The internships I did here through Sister Annella's class with the Charlotte Redevelopment Authority were wonderful. I was able to get involved in the redevelopment of the 2nd ward, where City Hall is now. I did all the surveys for the relocation of two of their major projects, and got an interest in rebuilding." From there, he went on to Philadelphia and spent a summer working for Housing & Urban Development, as a housing intern. He then went to a city redevelopment group in Lancaster, PA. After the Abbey, he went on to Hartford, Connecticut working for the City. He got his degree in community development—a Masters of Public Administration. He lived there for 18 years and ended up with Traveler's Real Estate Investment Group later in his career.

At the Abbey, Alphonso developed his skills of bringing communities together. "I put a lot of value on the instruction from Father Anselm on Ethics and Communications, on an honest person-

to-person basis. The differences I saw in people, North, South...to hear the guys here talk about their backgrounds, to see the reality of ethnic communities and ethnic politics and at the end of the day having to work toward a common goal. That interaction with a different ethnic group, on a personal guy-to-guy basis, was very helpful and instructional. The size of the Abbey and the instruction was good and we had good people that wanted to help the students grow."

The faculty and staff ensured foundations were formed here for Alphonso. "Fr. Cuthbert was a difference maker, no question, and Sister Annella Lynn (Sociology), Dr. Herndl (English), Mrs. Lay (French), Fr. Anselm Biggs. Fr. Cuthbert brought a spiritual reverence, but he was more of a leader and an administrator for me. He brought a great set of qualities, and deep down in each of these cases, the priestliness of them was really amplified, that spiritual commitment was the difference."

The Abbey helped him start his family life too. "I capped it off with a marriage here at the Basilica," He met his wife in his senior year, a local Baptist, who became Catholic the day before their wedding at the Abbey Basilica. The Friday before their wedding, Alphonso was prepared to attend his bachelor's party, but Fr. Allen told him "I want you to go over to Charlotte with me. There's a Catholic church there." Begrudgingly, he agreed. Upon their arrival at the church, Alphonso asked, "Why are we here?" In response, Miss Cook, Fr. Allen's secretary, opened the door to the church, the lights came on, and there was his bride to be—she was baptized that night.

Alphonso came to the Abbey to succeed, and accepted a place in the Abbey's history as the first black student to graduate. Despite his initial inclination not to be a first, in the end he wanted to show those who made it possible for him to be here that he appreciated them, he wanted them to be happy and proud. "Somewhere in all of this I built this interest in building and neighborhood revitalization," Alphonso reflected. And build he has. ■



# INTERVIEW WITH BROTHER LEO YOUNG

By Olivia Young '21

Brother Leo Young is an alumnus and a member of the monastery at Belmont Abbey College. He graduated from the College in 2013 and entered the monastery in March of 2018. We were able to ask him questions about his time as an Abbey student, his discernment process, life in the monastery, and his interaction with current students at Belmont Abbey.

## **Why did you decide to come to Belmont Abbey College?**

“I transferred to Belmont Abbey in my junior year. I had spent two years at Ave Maria University in Florida, and wanted to transfer somewhere closer to home (I’m originally from Winston Salem, NC). I was able to transfer almost all of my credits from Ave Maria to Belmont Abbey, and the school had a Catholic identity, which was important to me. So it was an easy choice.”

## **What attracted you to Belmont Abbey College?**

“I admit my reasons for choosing the Abbey were largely pragmatic. But upon arrival, I was attracted to the lovely, quiet campus, the beautiful architecture of the Basilica and monastery walls, and the small campus and student body size. The main activity I participated in as a student, which prepared me for monastic life, was prayer, particularly attending Mass in the Basilica and spending time praying before the Blessed Sacrament in the St. Joseph Adoration Chapel. Having Our Lord’s Eucharistic Presence reserved for prayer and adoration virtually 24/7, just a short walk from my dorm, was an invaluable gift. I trust that the hours I spent in prayer in that little chapel over my two years here were some of the most formative of my college years and that it was there,

especially that the Lord was preparing me to receive my vocation. I occasionally led praise and worship as a student, in the chapel and once in the Basilica. I performed in an a cappella group for Abbey’s Got Talent my senior year, which was a blast. I also acted in a few plays (and would have been happy to do a few more) under Simon Donoghue’s direction.”

## **Did you always know that you wanted to be part of the monastery, or did you realize while you were a student here? Was there an experience that had you thinking about joining the monastery?**

“Actually, I never considered the monastery as a vocation while I was a student. I had been thinking about monastic life generally since I was about 19 when I saw a documentary film about a monastic community in France. The film was my first exposure to monastic life, and it seemed to awaken a desire within me to experience that way of life firsthand. I got to know Abbot Placid while I was a student here, and he quickly became a mentor-like figure for me. But it wasn’t until after graduation that a vocation to this monastery crossed my mind. About



a year after graduation, I came to the monastery to visit the Abbot. It was by all appearances an ordinary visit, but interiorly I suddenly had a sense of being drawn to the monastery, which only grew after I left. I made several subsequent visits to the monastery, during which time the feeling of being called, and my attraction to the community, quickly grew. I had to spend a few years working to pay off student loan debts from college and was finally able to enter in 2018.”

## **What are some things that you contribute to the monastery as a new member? Are you in a time of formation that keeps you separate from the community?**

“A monk is in formation for his first four years in the monastery, from novitiate to solemn vows. I am currently in temporary vows, which means I have made a three-year vow (from July 2019-July 2022) to live as a monk here, at the end of which



period I may request to profess solemn vows. There is no period of strict separation from the larger community during this time. I have been coordinating the music for the 7 p.m. Sunday Mass during the school year, and I serve as assistant sacristan. I am also an organist-in-training, and director of the monastic schola. In addition, I am taking a class in the college, and a few formation classes within the monastery. And I will soon be teaching Gregorian chant as part of formation in the monastery.”

**What are some ways you help current students on campus? Do you anticipate a role that has you working with students in the future?**

“My work assignments mostly pertain to the monastery, so I’m not terribly involved with the students right now -- the one exception being coordinating music for the student Mass. I’ve really enjoyed working with the student cantors (some non-students, too) for the Mass! I don’t know what the future holds regarding further involvement with students -- I do know that I would love to teach a class on Gregorian chant in the college ... someday!”

**What are some ways Belmont Abbey has changed since you were a student here?**

“It’s difficult for me to answer this question in too much detail since I am not heavily involved in the College right now. But, compared to when I was a student, the prevalence of athletics is noticeably greater. The Honors College is obviously new, and I’m very excited about that program. It seems to be attracting some very fine and dedicated students.”

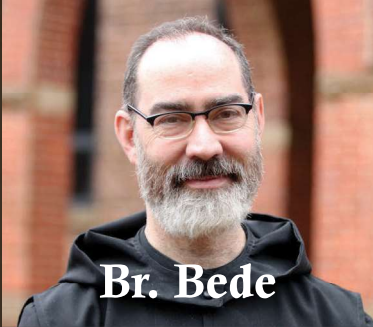
**What are some misconceptions that students have about the monks at Belmont Abbey?**

“I can’t speak for the current students, but hopefully there are not too many misconceptions. When I was a student, I remember not having many conceptions about the monks at all -- there were fewer monks then, and we only saw a few of them on campus day-to-day, so I didn’t know much about them. I have gotten quite a few questions from students about silence in the monastery (“Are you guys allowed to talk in there?!”) Yes, we speak, at the appropriate times and at a sensible volume! (I’m kidding -- but yes, we talk!)” ■





# NEWS FROM THE MONASTERY



**Br. Bede**

**Brother Leo and Brother Bede** have made their first profession of “simple vows”, which are for a further discernment period of three years. They are known in the community as Juniors or Junior Professed.



**Br. Leo**

**Mr. Connor Jones** (BAC '18) and **Mr. Justin Meyers** entered the novitiate on January 14, 2020, receiving respectively the names Brother Samuel and Brother Bernard. They will be under the direction of the Novice Master, Father Elias, for the next year.



**Br. George**

**Brother George and Brother James** are pursuing seminary studies for ordination at the Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana. Brother George will be ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Peter Jugis, Bishop of Charlotte, in the Abbey Basilica on April 14, Tuesday of Easter Week.



**Br. James**

The monastery will have its regular canonical visitation March 15-19. This is a type of quality control audit each monastery undergoes every five years. The community has done a self-study exercise, and monks from other monasteries of our Congregation will review our self-study and interview each monk to ensure that the monastic life is being lived with integrity at Belmont Abbey. The visitors are Abbot Mark Cooper of St. Anselm Abbey, Manchester, NH, and Father Jonathan Licari, a monk of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, MN, who is currently the Administrator of Mary Mother of the Church Abbey, Richmond, VA.





# CaroMont Health Hospital Coming Soon

On Monday, May 20, 2019, CaroMont Health announced plans to invest more than \$300 million in capital projects and facility improvements in Gaston County over the next five years. Projects include the addition of a critical care tower on the main campus of CaroMont Regional Medical Center in Gastonia, the construction and renovation of several medical office buildings, and the construction of a second hospital in Belmont, which will be located on Belmont Abbey monastic land, adjacent to our main campus.

“CaroMont Health has provided life-changing and life-saving medical care to the citizens of Gaston County for nearly 75 years,” said Chris Peek, President and Chief Executive Officer at CaroMont Health. “This investment is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to this community and the thousands of patients who trust us to care for them.”

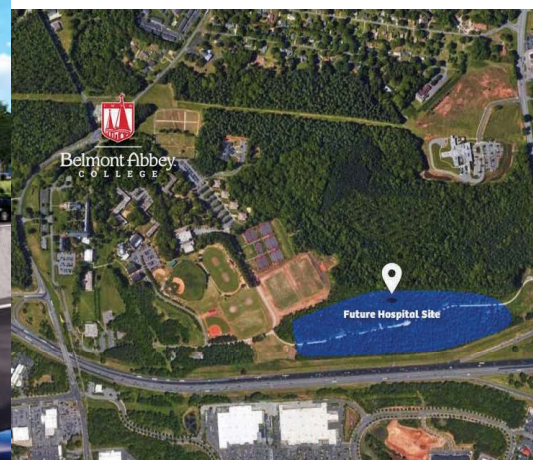
While services are still being planned for CaroMont Regional Medical Center-Belmont, the facility is expected to offer an emergency department, inpatient units for patients requiring admission or observation, a labor and delivery unit, and a full complement of diagnostic services including laboratory and imaging. Pending CON approval, the hospital could open as early as 2023.

“Belmont Abbey College exemplifies the true spirit of our community – one of progress, integrity, excellence and virtue – and shares many of our core values,” said Peek. “Much like healthcare, education has the unique ability to enrich and support not only the recipient, but also all who surround them. A highly regarded institution like Belmont Abbey, focused on the advancement of others, strengthens our community. We are proud to be part of such a historic moment.”

CaroMont Health has selected a site near the crossing of Highway

273 and Interstate 85 to build the new hospital. Owned by Belmont Abbey, adjacent to our campus. The health system will enter into a long-term agreement to lease the land and support Belmont Abbey College’s future plans to establish a health sciences program. Specifically, CaroMont Health plans to support our plans to establish a health sciences program through clinical rotation opportunities.

“The monks of Belmont Abbey happily welcome this exciting opportunity for Belmont Abbey College and CaroMont Health to combine our shared values and cooperate in promoting the welfare of our Gaston County community and its future growth and prosperity,” said Abbot Placid Solari, O.S.B. “Bringing together two remarkable and storied institutions, the partnership between CaroMont Health, a leading healthcare provider, and Belmont Abbey College, a leading institution of higher education, is a game changer for the region and beyond. We are excited about the opportunity to collaborate with CaroMont Health to provide the highest levels of medical care and academic excellence,” said Dr. Bill Thierfelder, president of Belmont Abbey College. ■



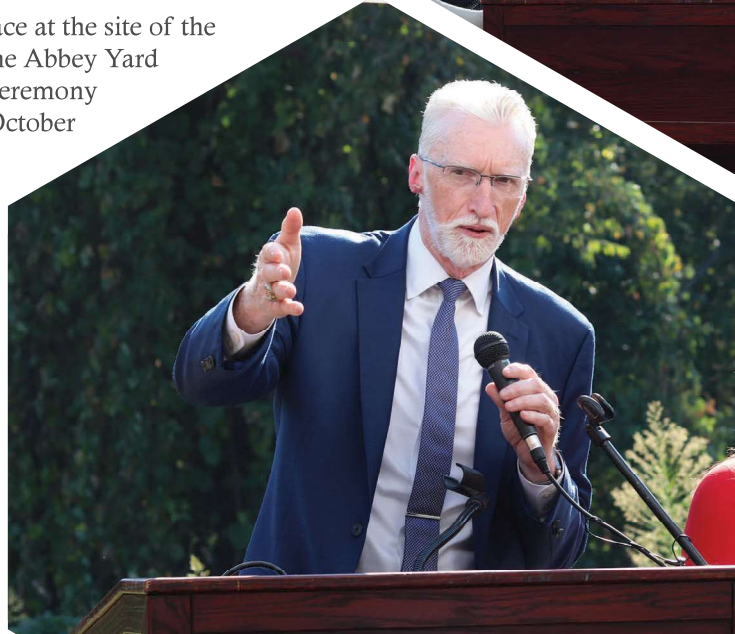


# Groundbreaking for New Residence Hall

**B**elmont Abbey College has officially broken ground on the newest addition to its campus, a 136-room residence hall. The largest capital investment in the college's history, the new hall will primarily serve upperclassmen but also add new classroom, office, and meeting space. MKC Architects designed the new building to mirror the Gothic architecture prominent on the college's campus. University Housing Solutions is the contractor building the new facility.

The groundbreaking took place at the site of the new hall directly across from the Abbey Yard baseball field. Parking for the ceremony began at 4 p.m. on Thursday, October 3rd.

The ceremony was the same day as Gastonia's FUSE groundbreaking in downtown Gastonia which took place at 5 p.m. Two great developments for Gaston County occurring on the same day gave a strong testimony to the growth and excitement in greater Gaston County. We have much to be thankful for and look forward to the completion of both these great ventures. ■





# NEW FACES



**Virginia Lange de Fernández**  
Executive Assistant to the President's Office



**Maria Dimura**  
Senior Executive Assistant to the President



**Nicholas Whitrow**  
Head Rugby Coach

**Gabriela M. Montalvo-González**

Multimedia Designer

**Michelle Harrison**

Marketing Project Manager

**Lilianna Romie**

Assistant Registrar

**Thomas Kelly**

Assistant Golf Coach

**Derek Sullivan**

Assistant Men's Volleyball Coach

**Malik Pedroso**

Assistant Men's Lacrosse Coach

**William Urban**

Assistant Men's Lacrosse Coach

**Zachary Ruebesam**

Assistant Men's Basketball Coach

**Ashton Whitakaker**

Assistant Softball Coach

# NEW PLACES

**Beth Egan**

Assistant Director of Career Services

**Elisa Fisher**

Assistant Vice Provost for Data Management & IR

**Julie Hodge**

Director of Financial Aid

**Tony Mele**

Head Softball Coach



# Money the Abbey Way

Financial Literacy @ The Abbey

By Nathalie Coté

**D**o you think about money the Abbey Way? Beliefs about money are intimately related to what it means to live a good life and to lead a life of integrity, to succeed professionally, to become a responsible citizen, and to be a blessing to yourself and others (as it says in the College's mission statement).

On September 20, 2019, the college launched a new program to improve the financial literacy of its students, called Money the Abbey Way: Financial Literacy @ The Abbey. At the launch event on Friday September 20, 2019, over 200 students attended workshops on budgeting and appropriate use of credit in the mezzanine of the Abbot Walter Coggin Student Commons, or met one-on-one with a credit counselor to interpret their credit report. The event was sponsored by our community partner Fifth Third Bank, with credit counselors from Cleveland County Community Development Corporation and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing Partnership.

In addition to learning basic principles of personal finance, Abbey students will discuss Church teachings about money, and spend time reflecting on their beliefs and values regarding money and financial obligations to self, family, and community. The centerpiece of the Money the Abbey Way program is a one-credit financial literacy course. There will also be annual workshops, public lectures, and features in the student newspaper. Graduating seniors will be able to consult with a professional about their personal financial situation.

Money the Abbey Way is the College's Quality Enhancement Plan, built into the college's accreditation cycle for the next several years. The topic was chosen based on a multi-year discussion with faculty, staff, alumni, students, and administrators about how to enhance our students' education and advance the college's mission.

For more information, or to volunteer to be involved, please contact Money The Abbey Way Faculty Coordinator Nathalie Coté at 704-461-6754 or [ncote@bac.edu](mailto:ncote@bac.edu). ■







# Women's Soccer Wins Individual Messick Award

**B**elmont Abbey captured the Fall Individual Messick Sportsmanship Award for women's soccer, the Conference Carolinas office announced today. The award is in recognition of having demonstrated the best sportsmanship in each respective sport, as voted upon by member coaches and student-athletes.

King won two of the awards, while Southern Wesleyan and North Greenville split the other two.

The sportsmanship awards are presented annually to the member institution judged to have exhibited the highest degree of sportsmanship and respect among its players, coaches, and fans during their regular playing season. The winning institution is recognized for its overall commitment to providing a quality playing environment for home and visiting fans, players, and staff members.

Conference Carolinas athletics directors implemented the process by which the Conference Carolinas Messick Sportsmanship Awards are determined. A student-athlete and coach from each school vote separately upon the sportsmanship of all conference competitors. Each institution then submits those votes to the conference office, where averages are calculated to decide the winner for each conference-sponsored sport. The rankings of each school's conference-sponsored sports are then used to determine the institution which has displayed the best sportsmanship across all sports throughout the year, and that institution is named the winner of the Messick Sportsmanship Award.

The individual team sportsmanship awards are now in their ninth year, reflecting Conference Carolinas' commitment to exhibiting and recognizing sportsmanship throughout the conference. As an NCAA Division II member, Conference Carolinas prides itself on creating a positive game environment through sportsmanship to ensure a positive experience for student-athletes and fans alike. ■



# Crusaders First in Initial Hawn Cup Overall Standings

**A** regular-season championship in women's volleyball and second-place finishes in men's and women's soccer have given Belmont Abbey an early lead in the overall and women's Hawn Cup Standings, the league office announced today.

The Crusaders garnered 12 points both women's volleyball and soccer (11+1 for a runner-up tournament finish), plus seven points in women's cross country to gain 31 of 36 possible (86.11%) in the women's standings. King is second (79.17%) with Mount Olive third (72.22%).

On the men's side, The Abbey tallied 10 points for soccer and five points in cross country to rank fourth at 68.18 percent. Mount Olive leads with 17.5 points (79.55%), just ahead of Emmanuel (77.27%). Erskine is third with 70.45%.

The overall race sees Belmont Abbey first at 79.31%, followed by Mount Olive (75.00%) and Emmanuel (73.28%).

The Joby Hawn Cup, named after H.C. "Joby" Hawn, the first full-time commissioner of what was then known as the Carolinas Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (CIAC) and now Conference Carolinas, is the all-sports award for Conference Carolinas. ■



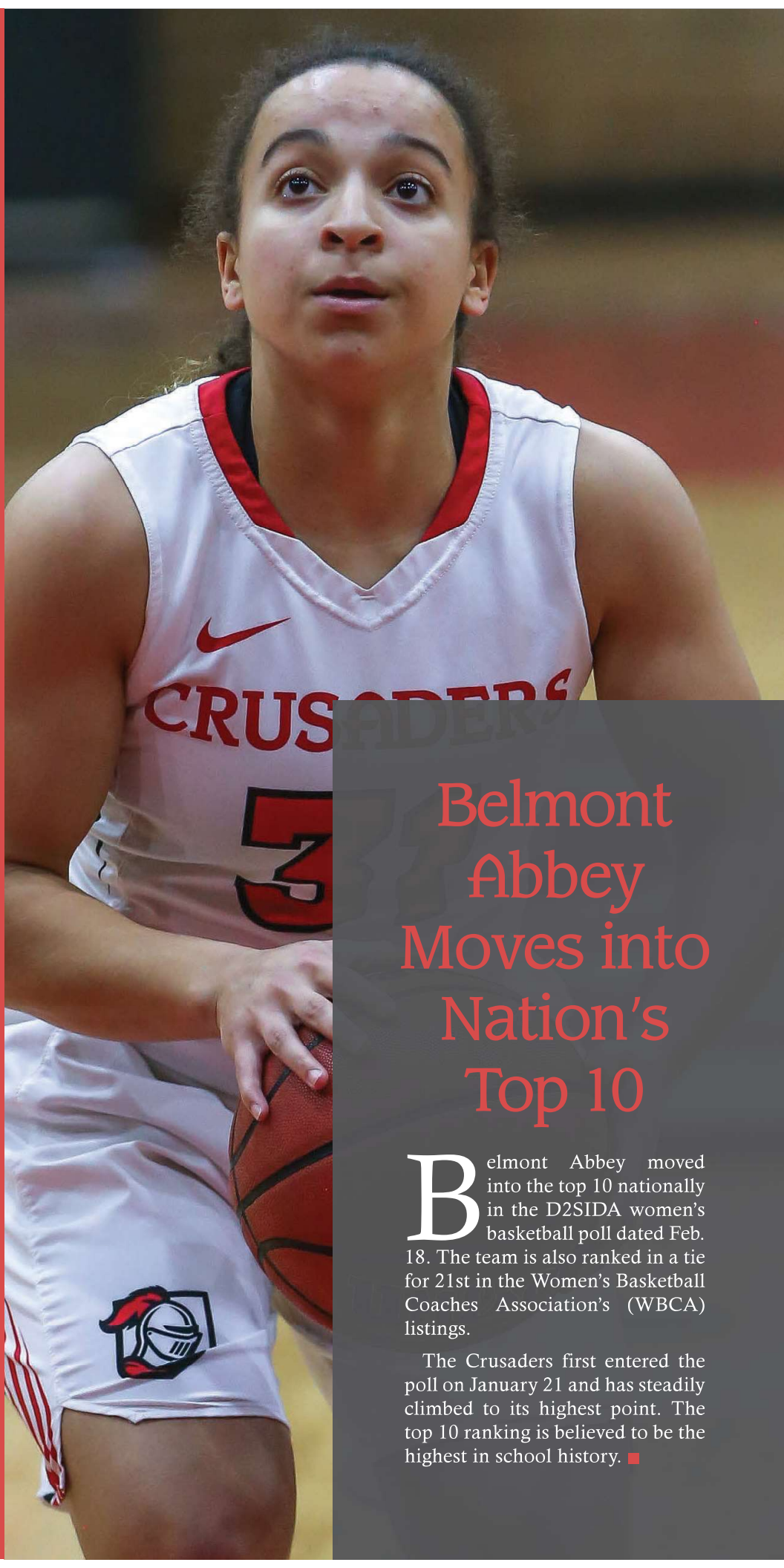


# Belmont Abbey Celebrates Giving Tuesday Success

**B**elmont Abbey Athletics more than doubled last year's Giving Tuesday efforts, surpassing \$85,000, Director of Athletics Stephen Miss announced today.

"As a result of the leadership of Michelle McNeight and Mike Thomas, our entire team - students, coaches, athletic trainers, administrators, alumni, parents, and numerous other members of the Crusader nation - went #AbbeyAllin to #RaisetheGreen2019, creating a synergy and outcome that left us all stunned, amazed, blown away, gobsmacked, deeply humbled, and ineffably grateful for and by everyone's generosity," Miss said. "We look forward to executing our future philanthropic efforts and already are planning our #20/20Vision for next year's Giving Tuesday."

In addition to more than doubling the previous year's \$35,000 raised, The Abbey's Department of Athletics benefited from the generosity of 650 donors, more than twice as many as the previous year's 298. ■



## Belmont Abbey Moves into Nation's Top 10

**B**elmont Abbey moved into the top 10 nationally in the D2SIDA women's basketball poll dated Feb. 18. The team is also ranked in a tie for 21st in the Women's Basketball Coaches Association's (WBCA) listings.

The Crusaders first entered the poll on January 21 and has steadily climbed to its highest point. The top 10 ranking is believed to be the highest in school history. ■





# Belmont Abbey Adds Rugby; Whitrow Named Head Coach

**B**elmont Abbey College is adding Men's Rugby as its 41st intercollegiate sport, Director of Athletics Stephen Miss announced today.

In addition, Miss announced that Nick Whitrow, the head coach at Charlotte Catholic High School, has been named as the program's first head coach.

"After having conducted extensive analysis and an extended search, we are excited to announce the addition of Men's Rugby as a program and of Nick Whitrow as our Head Coach," Miss said. "Ideally suited to mentor, teach, form, develop, and, thus, coach our students, Coach Whitrow's persistent pursuit of our head coaching opportunity and his passion for the sport of rugby inspired confidence that he not only will establish and, in time, grow our program into one of perennial regional and national prominence but, more importantly, that he will attract students who will enhance the culture of the Belmont Abbey College community as a whole."

A USA Rugby level 300 coach, Whitrow has been in coaching since 1998, most recently at Charlotte Catholic, where he serves as head coach and as a learning support specialist. He was the assistant coach for the Clemson men's team from 2013-16 and still serves as an adjunct instructor in the Athletic Leadership Department. From 2016-18, he also helped reestablish the Clemson women's program, finishing ninth nationally in Division 2 before returning them to Division 1 Rugby and competing in two Collegiate Rugby Championships.

Over the last several years, Whitrow has been heavily

involved in youth rugby in the Carolinas region acting as head coach for the South Carolina Select side in 2016 and the North Carolina All-Stars in 2019, winning the bowl and South Championship, respectively, with those teams. He has created an academy for the elite youth rugby players in Carolinas region, taking a team to the high school bracket of the Collegiate Rugby Championships (CRC) where the team went finished ninth at 2-3. He also worked with the High School All-American Boys team from 2010-12

"I am deeply honored to be given the responsibility of forming the foundations of this program at Belmont Abbey College," Whitrow said. "With such a beautiful campus, so close to one of the fastest-growing economic cities in the United States, I firmly believe that the experiences young men will have here will be second to none.

"I would like to thank the Chancellor, Abbot Placid Solari, O.S.B., President Dr. William Thierfelder and Athletic Director Stephen Miss for defining the vision, guiding the creation and allowing me to be part of this wonderful opportunity," he continued. "Their dedication to creating an environment consistent with both the values of Belmont Abbey College and the sport of Rugby already sets a wonderful platform from which this program can launch."

Nick and his wife, Jodi, have two children -- Lily (8) and Ashton (6). They will be relocating to the Charlotte area in the summer of 2020.

The 2020-21 athletic year will mark the inaugural season of Abbey Rugby. ■





# Homecoming 2019

Homecoming is the time that Abbey students return to the campus each year for a weekend of catching up, celebrating, and making new friends. Homecoming 2019 was just that: a weekend of nostalgia and new friendships. Our sincere thanks go out to every person who attended this past year's Homecoming and we hope to see everyone at Homecoming 2020!









# A Recap of Christmas 2019











# Opening of the Science Building

(More to come in our next issue!)





# To Give and To Receive

Perpetuating the Belmont Abbey College Experience

By Monica Mattioli

The life stories of Jim '68 and Linda '93/97 Adams are woven among their decades of involvement with Belmont Abbey College. On an unusually warm October day, in the comfort of their Winston-Salem living room, Jim and Linda reflected upon their deep and abiding relationship, which began at The Abbey. Jim and Linda are proud members of the Belmont Abbey College 1876 Heritage Giving Society, having established a legacy gift to perpetuate their passion for The Abbey's mission and commitment to Excellence and Virtue. The tale of Linda and Jim explains why they – and many others – have chosen to create a plan to sustain Belmont Abbey College for years to come.

Jim was first to arrive at The Abbey in 1964, right out of High School (sight unseen). He always knew he wanted to be a teacher and taught middle school for nearly forty years. Jim applied to the only Catholic college in the state, a distinction that remains true to this day. He fell in love with the weather in North Carolina and, after 18 years of Hudson, Massachusetts winters, Jim was ready for a milder climate. What he experienced as a student went well beyond fair weather. He became and remains a PhiKap. And, he fondly remembers the influence of the Monks, especially Abbot Oscar, Fr. Anselm, and “grandfatherly” Abbot Walter, as well as Belmont Abbey's beloved Humpy Wheeler. Education at Belmont Abbey College in those days, as today,

was “no nonsense.” Jim touts the residual effects of those years, which were translated into his own classroom instruction. Jim loudly and proudly declares his Belmont Abbey College days to be “the best four years of my life!”

It seems there was an unforeseen purpose to Jim's ultimate decision to teach in the Gaston County area. In 1986, he met his wife-to-be, Linda, a tax preparer hailing from the Tri-Cities region of Tennessee. The two met, married and began active involvement in daily campus life. Meanwhile, Linda decided to pursue two degree programs as an adult student. As an accountant, numbers matter to Linda. She arranged her studies with a goal of first graduation in 1993, crossing the stage on the 25th anniversary of Jim's graduation! Her next degree was completed in 1997. Throughout, their shared affection for The Abbey prompted them to actively volunteer as alumni in “virtually everything” – Homecoming, Phone-A-Thons, helping in the office, and “you name it”, until retirement.

Since those days, life has changed considerably for Linda and Jim, but their love for The Abbey has endured. After retirement, Jim was diagnosed with chronic kidney disease. Frequent treatment visits evolved and the couple determined it best to relocate to Winston-Salem

for ready access to his transplant team at Wake Forest Medical Center, while awaiting a Type O donor kidney. They actively encourage education about kidney donation. Jim's story has been shared with his PhiKap brothers. Jim epitomizes the couple's faith and philosophy: “We always pray and hope something good will happen.” Jim and Linda are receptive to anyone interested in learning more about kidney donation.

To give and to receive – that is the story of Belmont Abbey 1876 Heritage Society members, Jim '63 and Linda '93/97 Adams.

Calling all members of Belmont Abbey College Heritage Society! We would love to hear from you and welcome tales of your Belmont Abbey College experiences. ■

**For further information and to discuss involvement in planned giving, contact [monicamattioli@bac.edu](mailto:monicamattioli@bac.edu)**





# Who's Your Favorite Abbey Faculty?

## Facebook Edition

**T**he Belmont Abbey Alumni Office asked Facebook followers to name their most memorable professors from the Abbey. Here are some (lightly edited) highlights from their responses.

**Jill Bloede** was an incredible mentor who saw and brought out a ton of gifts! I think about my Theatre classes with **Simon Donoghue** and **Gary Sivak** often! (Who isn't grateful they know the history of musical theatre and the ability to use a saw?!) **Dr. Mary Ellen Weir** took my neutral position on English and transformed it! **Dr. David Williams** provided incredible insight with phenomenal jokes!

- Sr. Kelly Williams, R.S.M. '10

**Dr. Gerald Malsbary!** He always made time for independent Latin, even though he had a full class load. He always made time for students who wanted to continue their Latin or Greek studies.

- Mary Whitfield '14

**Dr. Gary Scott.** No questions asked. That is all.

-Sean Faherty '15

**Dr. Thuot and Fr. Arthur Pendleton-**no question!

- Hannah Barnhorn

"Everybody say ALRIGHT!"

- Brendan Ryan '00





**Dr. Frank Murray.** He took this mediocre student and gave him a lifelong love of history & the written word. He was always there with a kind word & sage advice. He taught me the importance of thorough preparation in all endeavors. Frank Murray turned my life around & I will be forever indebted.

- John Monaghan '75

**Father Christopher Kirchgessner, O.S. B.** really made me think about theology and faith in such profound ways that continue to influence me to this day. I took as many of his classes as I could because they were so incredible!

- Amanda Sloan '09

**Dr. Melinda Ratchford** is not only a remarkable professor but an incredible human who has inspired me in a myriad of ways. Her classes have set the foundation for my future experiences as an educator. I learned a tremendous amount from her about elementary education and beyond.

- Samantha Epstein '04

**Dr. Rebecca Munro, Dr. William Van Lear, Dr. Eugene Thuot, Dr. Mike Hood, Dr. Rajive Tiwari, Dr. Cook, Dr. Mary Ellen Weir, Dr. Plecnik** were all terrific professors. Many of them are still friends. However, **Dr. Fowler** might have been more prophet than professor. His Great Books lectures are the stuff of myth and legends. I sometimes I open up the lecture notes to periodically remember the wit and wisdom. Requiem Aeternum.

- Mitchell Button '10

**Dr. Berry, Father Cuthbert, and Father John.**

- Gardiner Pollich '71

**Fr. 'Pop' Martin, O.S.B.** The greatest of all time! Thank you, Pop.

- Adam Shea '91



# *In Loving Memory*

**Lewis W. Moon '67**  
Frederick, MD  
08/15/2019

**George R. Tydings '66**  
Chevy Chase, MD  
09/02/2019

**James C. Rasmussen '73**  
High Point, NC  
10/02/2019

**Eileen V. Becker '85**  
Charlotte, NC  
10/13/2019

**Daniel J. Farrellb '76**  
South Amboy, NJ  
10/21/2019

**John H. Von Bargaen '61**  
Mount Vernon, NY  
10/28/2019

**John A. Hanna '58**  
Seaford, VA  
11/03/2019

**Thomas S. Maloney '67**  
Jacksonville, FL  
11/9/2019

**William S. Withers, Sr. '57**  
Stanley, NC  
12/08/2019

**J. Stewart Greer '73**  
Roseboro, NC  
12/15/2019

**Andrew S. McGinn '74**  
Jackson, NJ  
12/21/2019

**Colin M. Reno '19**  
Nashville, TN  
12/30/2019

**Harry J. McCarthy '51**  
Newport News, VA  
01/03/2020

**V. Nicole Tiller Ballew '92**  
Indian Trail, NC  
1/6/2020

**Jerry J. Bostic '69**  
Stanley, NC  
01/08/2020

**Thomas W. Knowles, III '74**  
Cramerton, NC  
1/16/2020

**Dr. George L. Nichols, Jr. '89**  
Lenoir, NC  
1/18/2020

**Jacqueline S. Thomas '11**  
Charlotte, NC  
01/22/2020

**William E. Tuller '62**  
Knoxville, TN  
02/08/2020

*Remembering  
Fr. Arthur Pendleton  
1930 - 2020*





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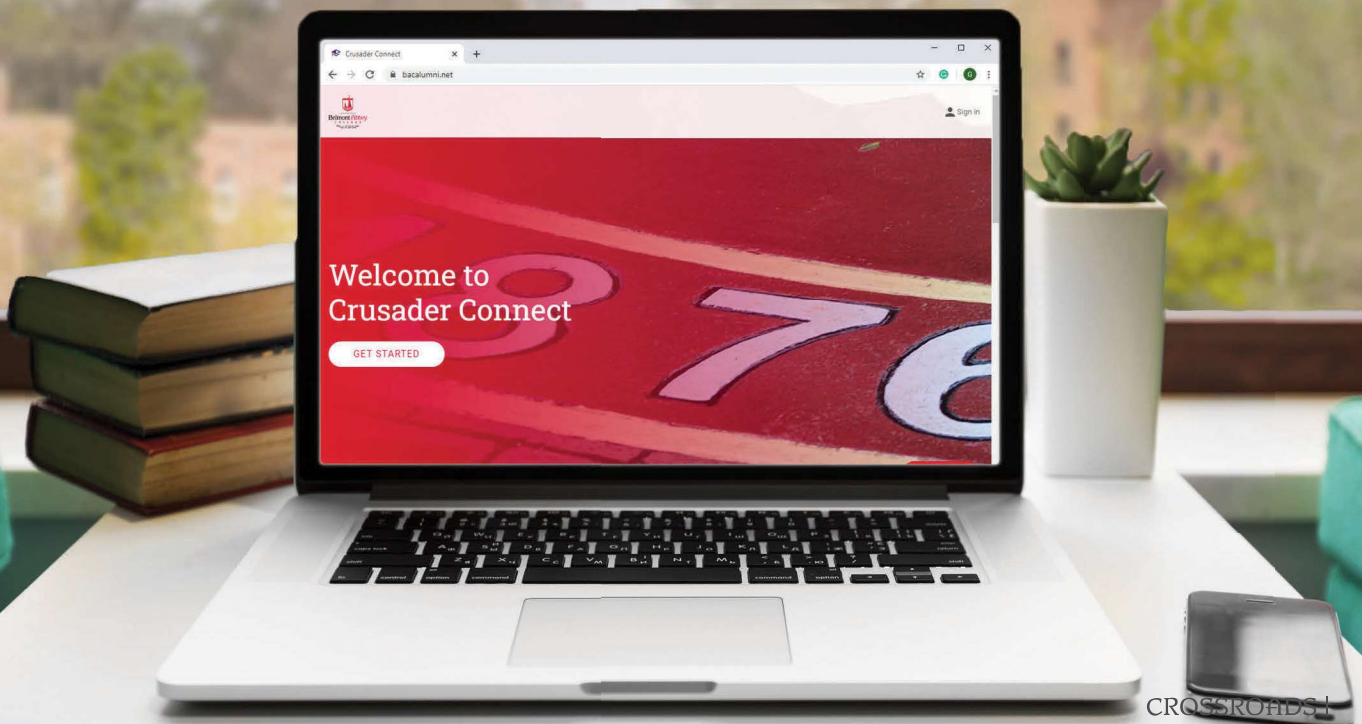
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